

**TOWNSHIP OF MANSFIELD
COUNTY OF BURLINGTON**

RESOLUTION 2015-12-6

OPPOSING THE SOUTHERN RELIABILITY LINK PIPELINE PROJECT AND CALLING FOR A MORATORIUM ON ANY AND ALL PLANNING, PROPOSAL, SURVEYING OR CONSTRUCTION OF THE SOUTHERN RELIABILITY LINK PIPELINE PROJECT.

WHEREAS, New Jersey Natural Gas (“NJNG”) is proposing to build an entirely new natural gas transmission pipeline, called the “Southern Reliability Link,” (SRL) to feed the southern portion of the utility’s service territory in Ocean, Monmouth, and a small portion of Burlington counties that will cut through the neighboring community of Chesterfield, through acres of farmland, portions of the Pinelands, and near hundreds of homes; and

WHEREAS, the proposed route for the 30-mile, 30 inch-diameter, high pressure transmission pipeline would begin in Chesterfield Township and traverse North Hanover Township in Burlington County, Upper Freehold Township in Monmouth County, Plumsted Township in Ocean County, and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst before connecting with the utility’s transmission system in Manchester Township, Ocean County;

WHEREAS, Transcontinental Pipeline Company LLC is proposing to construct a new meter and regulating station and a new 30,500 horsepower, electric motor-driven compressor station and associated electrical substation on the Transco Trenton Woodbury Lateral at 14-15 Bordentown-Chesterfield Rd. to connect the SRL Pipeline with the Transco Pipeline;

WHEREAS, the Township Committee is concerned about the potential risks the Transco Compressor Station poses to the health and safety of the people in nearby homes and businesses; and

WHEREAS, the pipeline will carry gas extracted from Pennsylvania’s Marcellus Shale through the process of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, an extreme method of oil and gas extraction that depletes and despoils clean water resources, creates toxic air emissions and radioactive waste, and contributes to the climate change crisis by releasing large quantities of methane gas into the atmosphere;

WHEREAS, the SRL Pipeline Project raises significant safety concerns for the Township of Mansfield, as well as potential harm to municipal and county infrastructure, and may therefore have a negative impact upon future development in the community; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Mansfield (the “Township”) is concerned about the hazard the project may create due to the nature and volume of the highly explosive gas flowing through the pipeline, and its proposed route, which crosses through residential neighborhoods. These communities will be in the “impact radius” should an explosion and/or spill occur; and

WHEREAS, according to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) the agency only has 139 inspectors to oversee 2.6 million miles of pipeline and their records show that only a fifth of that pipeline system has been inspected by PHMSA or its state partners since 2006; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Legislature recognized the significance of the Pinelands region and afforded special protection to the region and its resources in 1979 with the passage of the Pinelands Protection Act. The Act created the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) as the rules that guide land-use, development and natural resource protection programs in the state Pinelands Area. It also created the Pinelands Commission as an independent state agency whose mission is to “preserve, protect, and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the Pinelands National Reserve, and to encourage compatible economic and other human activities consistent with that purpose” through implementing the CMP.

WHEREAS, the Pinelands is recognized as a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization designated Biosphere Reserve recognized for its rare flora and fauna and operates under the Comprehensive Management Plan permitting development in appropriate places according to its regulations; and

WHEREAS, The federal government acknowledged the exceptional value of the Pinelands and the urgent need for their preservation in 1978 when congress passed the Federal National Parks and Recreation Act and designated the Pinelands National Reserve as the first National Reserve in the nation.

WHEREAS, New Jersey Natural Gas' Pipeline route passes through Pinelands Preservation Area, which is supposed to get the highest level of protection, being in the heart of the Pine Barrens ecosystem and home to many threatened and endangered species.

WHEREAS, many Township residents depend on ground water and public community water systems for water supply, and septic systems for waste disposal and this project could impact groundwater quality and quantity and the septic fields of residents along and adjacent to the right of way;

WHEREAS, the wise stewardship of our natural resources involves protection of Mansfield's water supplies and water and other natural resources for generations to come;

WHEREAS, protection of Mansfield Township's and regional water supplies and resources is better accomplished by prevention of contamination and environmental degradation, rather than attempting to clean up contamination and restoring degraded environments after the fact.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Mansfield, County of Burlington, the following recitals are incorporated as of December 9, 2015:

1. The Township of Mansfield opposes the New Jersey Natural Gas Southern Reliability Link Pipeline.
2. The calls for a moratorium on any and all planning, proposal, surveying, or construction on the New Jersey Natural Gas Southern Reliability Link Pipeline
3. Because these projects will traverse and negatively impact numerous significant natural areas and the resources of the municipality and the Pinelands region, the requests a full environmental review, including the Comprehensive Management Plan guidelines, be conducted to assess the myriad environmental consequences of the project.
4. The seeks the cooperation of other similarly located and affected townships asking that all nearby affected townships adopt a similar resolution
5. The adopts, and call upon similarly situated municipalities to adopt a resolution authorizing each Township to join together to enter their appearance in any proceeding before the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, Pinelands Commission, and any other regulatory authority, so that by their strength of numbers they may successfully oppose these pipeline projects and have the ability to cause the termination of the project so as to prevent environmental degradation and to protect the public health and safety.
6. The Township of Mansfield strongly urges the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, the Pinelands Commission, and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to reject the recently filed Petitions by New Jersey Natural Gas
7. The directs the municipal clerk to forward copies of this resolution to the following:

1. NJ Governor Chris Christie
2. State Senator Addiego
3. Assemblyman Howarth
4. Assemblywoman Rodriguez-Gregg
5. State Senator Allen
6. State Assemblyman Conaway Jr.
7. State Assemblyman Singleton
8. Pinelands Commission Executive Director Nancy Wittenberg and Commissioners
9. The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
10. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
11. Food & Water Watch, 100 Bayard Street, 2nd Floor, New Brunswick, NJ 08901
12. The Pinelands Preservation Alliance, 17 Pemberton Road, Southampton, NJ 08088
13. All Burlington County Municipal Committees
14. Colonel Frederick Thaden, Commander, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst
15. Ocean, Burlington, and Monmouth County Freeholders
16. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

MOTION:

SECOND:

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES:

NAYS: **ABSENT:** NONE

ABSTAIN:

CERTIFICATION

I, **LINDA SEMUS, RMC, CMR**, Municipal Clerk of the Township of Mansfield, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of the Resolution adopted by the Mansfield Township Committee, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey at their Regular Meeting held on December 9, 2015 at 7:30 PM at the Municipal Complex.

LINDA SEMUS, RMC, CMR, Municipal Clerk

